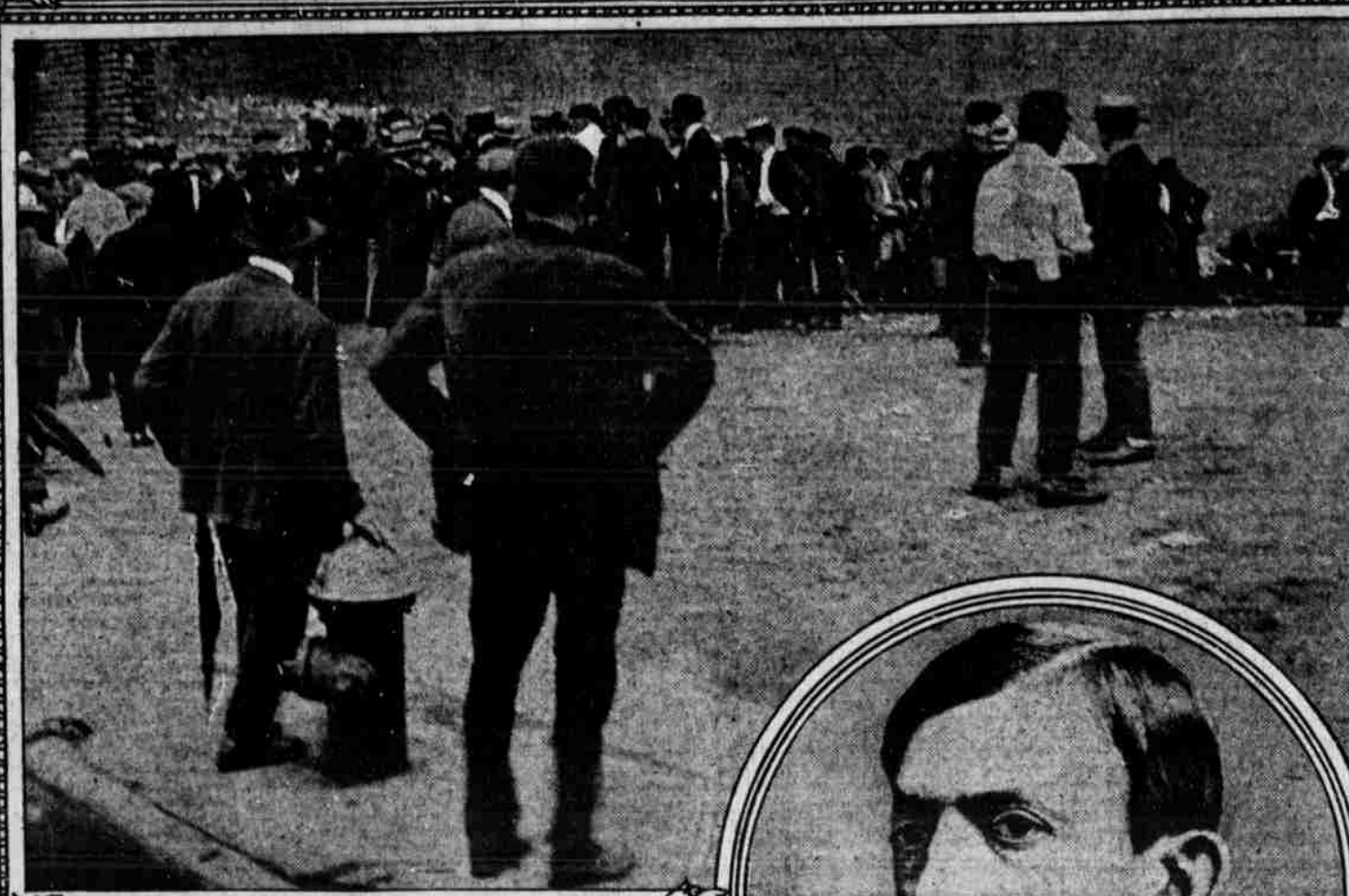
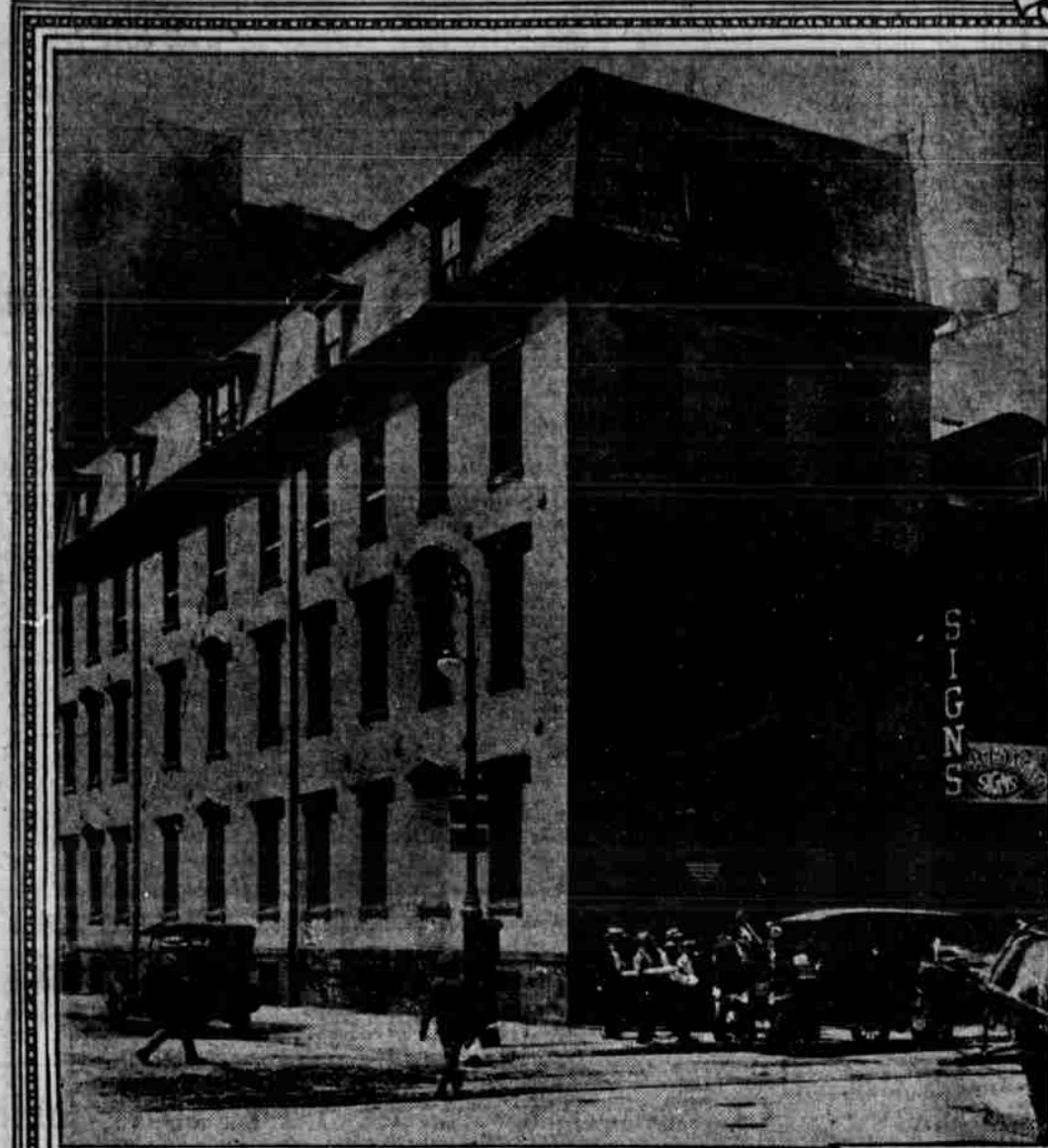
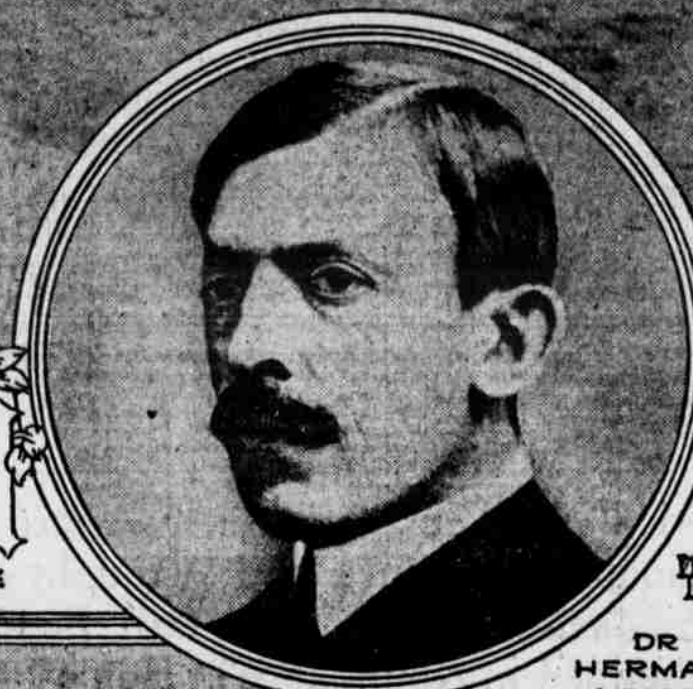


# The Drug Menace and What It Means to New York



A LINE OF UNFORTUNATES  
WAITING FOR RELIEF  
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DR. HERMAN BIGGS  
STATE HEALTH COMMISSIONER

## Astounding as Statistics Are They Fail to Tell Whole Story of the Most Baffling and Dangerous Vice

By WALTER A. DAVENPORT.

YOUR daily newspapers recently have sought to impress you with statements to the effect that there are 5,000,000 narcotic drug addicts in the United States; that there are 200,000 of these unfortunates in Greater New York city.

Both these figures probably are wrong. The more accurate thing to say would be to admit that neither our health administrators nor our great medical practitioners, nor for that matter any other person, has the most remote idea how many dope fiends America contains nor how many are nursing their habit here in New York.

No phase of human nature, no weakness of the human mind or body, and no psychological or pathological phenomenon has been quite so nearly impervious to physical research as the drug habit. The Anti-Saloon League built its powerful lobby upon research that was quite simple. There were so many distilleries, so many breweries, so many saloons and other liquor manufacturing and dispensing in the country. Observation of these places produced figures, and there you had the basis for the rest of the anti-alcohol propaganda.

Public gambling, while not so completely eradicated from our lives as booze, was pretty well legislated out of existence and legislated out effectively. The once spirited white slave traffic was completely ruined by the Mann act, and you could go on and on citing erstwhile thriving industries that became defunct through legislation brought about by observation and research.

But the drunkard was there for all the world to see. His ragged, undernourished family proclaimed his weakness. You saw positive evidence in flesh and blood of the desolation that alcohol wrought. The white slave to advertise its lack of recommendations as an accepted part of our everyday life. The opponents of public gambling called the legislators' attention to the bright young men who sped from good jobs to prison via the race track, the roulette wheel, dice and the poker game.

### Some Startling Figures.

In brief and fine the opponents of the less mysterious of our weaknesses found their work more or less easy because they had a tangible, corporeal something to lay hold upon. It entailed no vast genius to find the saloon nor the poolroom nor the false employment agencies and gang ridden dance halls and effectively close the source of drunkenness, gambling and white slavery.

But the authorities have found that you cannot stop what you can't see. But before dealing further in generalities it would be well to consider

a few home and homely facts. Dr. Royal H. Copeland, Health Commissioner for the City of New York, caused a study of acknowledged drug addicts to be made and he compiled therefrom certain vital statistics that you must ponder before you can appreciate fully the nauseous evil the dope fiend represents.

His study took in a superficial examination of 2,723 users of cocaine, morphine and heroin. These unhappy ones came from the five boroughs of the greater city. Two thousand three hundred and thirty-eight of them were white and 385 negroes. There were 2,216 men and 507 women. By nationalities they were classified as follows: American born, 850; Jews, 511; Italians, 64; Irish, 210; Spanish, 28; Japanese, 11; Germans, 399; English, 8; Scotch, 4; Canadians, 60; West Indians, 5; Brazilians, 2; Dutch, 2; Swedish, 7; Russians, 117; Polish, 212; Greeks, 28, and Chinese, 39.

Seven hundred and twenty-five of them were between 15 and 19 years old; 841 between 20 and 25; 626 between 26 and 30; 477 between 31 and 40; 104 of them were more than 40 years old.

One thousand nine hundred and forty-seven of them gave "bad companions" as the reason for their "relief from pain"; 174 pleaded "relief from pain"; 322 ascribed their addiction to "stickness"; 134 of them said they started through "curiosity," and just eleven of them declared their reason was "pleasure." Ten insisted that they had contracted the Man-hatan disease, as doctors have come to call the heroin habit, through "overwork" and a like number said that they had taken to dope that they might be able to do more work.

Economically these addicts divided themselves as follows: Those having a trade or profession, 1,648; unskilled workmen, 1,080. And 21 per cent. of the former are engaged in the business of transportation.

These figures require no further analysis. They are simple, one way fingerprints. And when you consider that the health authorities admit that we have at least 200,000 of these addicts right here in New York city you must appreciate that it is something to excite ourselves about.

Do you know that Dr. Copeland admits that he can account for only 15 per cent. of the narcotic drugs that are imported into this city every year? Do you know that the United States imports and manufactures every year sufficient opium to permit every man, woman and child in the country thirty-six one grain doses, and that the average dose is only one grain?

Do you know that, not counting the cocaine smuggled into this country, America manufactures 150,000 ounces of cocaine every year, and that only 25 per cent. of this is used legitimately? This means almost three illegal doses every year for every man, woman and child in the United States.

NO 128  
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EX-SEN  
WALTER R.  
HERRICK,  
STATE COMMISSIONER  
OF  
NARCOTIC  
CONTROL



DR. ROYAL S. COPELAND  
HEALTH COMMISSIONER OF NEW YORK CITY.

There is no country where the drug habit is so common. Until the United States Government adopted the Harrison law in December, 1914, we smoked more opium than China ever knew existed, even during the black years when opium was forced upon her. In the five years previous to the passage of the Harrison law the United States used 491,043 pounds of opium, for which we who answered at China paid \$18,841,720. In the same years we imported 1,048,259 pounds of coca leaves, at \$1 a pound. Of course we made cocaine out of them, and just 10 per cent. of this cocaine was used legitimately. The rest went to debauch our youths, girls as well as boys, and place America in a class that even the most depraved peoples of Asia and Africa to whom we sent missionaries to spread the gospel of Christianity avoided.

### How It Was Bought.

Of course the police always have frowned upon public "joy riding." But only recently have they gone out of their way to stop the sale and purchase of opium, morphine, heroin, cocaine and hashish. One doesn't have to be even middle aged to hark back to the wide open nights and afternoons when all you needed was a dollar and the address of any one of a thousand and one places to equip yourself with enough dope to keep you

happy, care free and blissful for twenty-four hours.

It hasn't been that long ago that you could purchase a deck of heroin for two bits right in the centre of Chatham Square. You could smoke opium, sniff cocaine, shoot morphine or chew hashish at any one of a dozen places within five minutes walk of Brooklyn Bridge. Gangsters who never drank alcohol in their lives would as soon attend a racket or set out to do a bit of slaughter without their blackjacks and guns as fail to load up on cocaine or heroin as a courage builder.

Police statistics demonstrate that to every murder committed by an alcoholic there have been four perpetrated by a dope fiend. And in almost every case the dope fiend murdered either when "charged" with his particular brand of drug or when suffering the temporary insanity that accompanies reaction.

Makes no mistake, however! The drug addict is by no means solely a product or a denizen of the poorer, the less educated and the lower social order of New York city. As a matter of fact there are more narcotic drugs used by the upper classes to-day than by their less affluent and erudite brothers and sisters of the East Side, Harlem and The Bronx.

Common humanity prevents the publication of typical names, but you would recognize dozens of them were you permitted to look over the books of the State Bureau of Narcotic Con-

trol. Lawyers, doctors, financiers, journalists, authors, painters, musicians, actors, educators and clergymen are sharing the miseries of drug slavery with street sweepers, motor-men, drivers, chauffeurs, janitors, elevator operators, cooks, waiters, garment workers and plain laborers.

The upper classes can afford to have their private physicians register for them. The poor man has no such protection. The forbidding prices of cocaine, heroin and opium send the less affluent to the Worth street drug line to get his daily shot of hop or cloud of dust. The fat wallet of the plutocratic doctor attracts the doctor who will ignore the piteous plea and the insignificant dollar of the slum victim.

Practically all the anti-narcotic laws of the States have been placed on the statute books in the last twelve years. It was not until 1885 that any State attempted to regulate the smoking of opium. In 1937 the State of Illinois first enacted a law restricting the sale of cocaine to physicians' prescriptions. Several States, notably Tennessee, have provided for the registration of drug addicts in a manner which has permitted them to obtain limited quantities of prescribed drugs under proper supervision. The State of New York went further and provided for the effective treatment of drug users in public sanitariums or under public supervision.

### Many State Laws Weak.

Many of the State laws are weak in effect that specifically they do not charge any one person or number of persons with their execution, and few, if any, of the statutes outline the methods to be employed in enforcing them. Few, if any, States ever have made a direct appropriation for the specific purpose of enforcing the existing anti-narcotic legislation. In the interest of effective enforcement of such legislation, both State and national, Dr. Copeland suggests a careful comparative study of existing legislation to determine the reasons for the evident inefficiency of present laws, a comprehensive compilation of accurate information in regard to the nature and extent of drug habituation, and consistent and persistent efforts for uniform and practical legislation that will effectively preclude the misuse of habit forming drugs.

As an illustration, at the present time forty-nine of our political divisions have some form of cocaine legislation on their statute books, but only twenty of the States make it unlawful for physicians to prescribe for habituated users and only seventeen States make it unlawful for other than those specially authorized to have cocaine or other narcotic drugs in their possession. In addition, thirty-seven States have opium legislation, but the greater number of these laws are so burdened with provisos and exceptions as to make them almost valueless from a practical point of view. In twenty States it is unlawful to prescribe narcotic drugs to habitual users, but practically all these laws, have been nullified by permitting a physician to prescribe the drugs in good faith for the treatment of habitual users. The laws of twenty-seven States prohibit or restrict the opening of opium dens, fifteen restrict the sale of hydrated chloral, but thirty-one of the States except from the more stringent restrictions for sales to the consumer quantities of opiates sufficient to maintain the ordinary addict or to develop others. In eleven States the law specifically permits the sale of limited quantities of cocaine without a physician's prescription.

Many thieves take dope to steady their nerves. The thief after a certain number of years is very apt to lose his courage, and in many cases he will charge himself with cocaine or heroin in order to get control over himself. The case of one notorious thief is recalled. He went into Police Headquarters and said he wanted to reform. He had lost his nerve. He went on to say that he had been stealing since he was 12 years old. He was now 27, had spent several terms in jail and his nerve was gone. And he added the significant remark that he did not want to do as others had—take drugs to steady him down.

It frequently happens that when a man is charged with drugs he becomes absolutely fearless. Two years ago on two occasions policemen were killed in Brooklyn—shot by dope fiends. Many of the so-called desperate gunmen who used to figure frequently in the newspapers are in reality the most afraid cowards, and only under the influence of cocaine or heroin are they capable of taking chances.

The dope fiend himself is, of course, an object of pity and should be taken care of as any other person suffering from illness. But for the man who traffics in dope nobody should show the slightest consideration. A number of these distributors have made illicit traffic in drugs a regular business for years. The profits are so enormous, running sometimes as high as 300 per cent., they can afford to take trips as far west as Kansas City and as far south as Mobile in order to get a supply.

As the campaign against this traffic progresses the sellers are put to it more and more to devise ways and means. A man who has the drugs for sale, for instance, will stand on the corner, just idling, say in front of a saloon. One of his customers will come along and will pay him for the "dope." Of course this man has no narcotics in his possession; he is too wise for that. The customer is told to walk around the street and look out for a woman with blond hair who will be walking toward him. He does this and as he passes the woman she slips him a deck from her muff. The next day the customer will come around for his usual supply, pay the man on the corner and will be told to stand in front of a certain house and wait. Presently a cigarette box will drop from an upper story window; he will find a deck of cocaine in it. On another day he will be told to go around to a certain saloon and ask for Johnny. Johnny will tell him to meet him in twenty minutes in another saloon. In the meantime Johnny goes somewhere and obtains the deck of cocaine.

### Smuggling Into Prisons.

A less clever man will carry dope on his person in all kinds of ways. He will have a false fountain pen half full of ink and half full of drug; he will have a false memorandum book; he will carry it sewed in the lining of his coat. Sometimes it is sold in candy falsely made up, hollow inside and packed full of dope; sometimes in cigarettes or in hollowed out rubber heels which are easily detachable from the boot. Women will conceal it in their hair.

Another phase of this traffic in drugs is concerned with smuggling the drugs into prisons. They will use any

extent of patience in order to get the drug to the inmates of the different jails. Of course the profits are enormous. One man used to split postal cards, put the white powder between the two parts and cleverly paste the parts together again, write a message on it and address it to the person in jail. Another trick of his was to remove about twenty or thirty pages of a magazine and paste the dope right in the binding, then put the pages back again. Sometimes he would write a letter on a piece of paper that had been soaked with some narcotic solution, so that the person receiving it could chew the paper and get some effect from the narcotic.

The startling feature of the drug addiction evil is its ubiquity. Hitherto the stage and the novel have found it easier to assure the public that the dope fiend was really a product of the second tenement districts. The dope-fiend of the upper classes generally was an elegant person who took his drug in a neat and orderly manner, never neglecting the nice proprieties and not forgetting to be a lady or a gentleman no matter how highly "charged with hop" or deeply "buried in snow."

### Where Legislation Fell Down.

Uncouth facts have a way of exploding nice theories and the campaign that Dr. Copeland is conducting in New York city is proving this good old trite platitude. In the first place the New York Legislature after weeks of speeches and many columns of newspaper agitation, passed the Whitney anti-narcotic drug law that required all addicts to register with the Bureau of Narcotic Drug Control. In the excitement or for some other and more mysterious reason, the legislators neglected to appropriate money to defray the expenses incurred in the administration of this excellent law.

Therefore the law is about as effective as a fervent wish in all sections of the State except in New York city. In Greater New York city the urge for such measures as this law provided was so strong that Dr. Copeland declared that the Department of Health would administer the law and assume the expenses incurred.

Whereat the State Bureau of Narcotic Control set up at 128 Prince street, under the direction of Walter R. Herrick, the commissioner of that department, and Ole Salthe, director of the bureau. The call went forth for addicts to come down and register. It was then estimated that there were at least 100,000 such unfortunates in the city. Since that call was sounded fewer than 4,000 of them have registered, but Dr. Copeland now says that he believes there are 200,000 in Greater New York.

The reason for the failure of the drug slaves to register are numerous. Some dread the ordeal. Others fear they will be catalogued like criminals. Still others figure that they can obtain their usual drug in greater quantity and with greater frequency if they adhere to their old secretive measures.

But the most astonishing reason is that there are some thousands of drug slaves in New York city who don't know that they are drug slaves. These are they who do not sniff cocaine nor heroin. They do not smoke opium nor chew hashish. They do not purchase

(Continued on Following Page.)